CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.543
15 March 1990

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND FORTY-THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 15 March 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Emeka Ayo Azikiwe (Nigeria)

GE.90-60350/1689B

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 543rd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I should like to extend a warm welcome in the Conference to two distinguished visitors who are addressing this plenary meeting. The Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand, the Honourable Frances Wilde, is a Member of Parliament who has served in several important posts in that capacity, in particular as Government Whip. Since 1987, she has held several Cabinet posts, having been appointed to her present functions in 1989. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Dr. Ali-Akbar Velayati, has regularly followed our work, having addressed the Conference on Disarmament on eight occasions since his first visit on 16 February 1984, and having presided over it on 1 September 1988. I wish to thank both Ministers for their presence here today, and I am looking forward to hearing their statements.

I should like to recall that 28 years ago yesterday the multilateral disarmament negotiating forum started its work in a new political configuration. Since 14 March 1962, when the first plenary meeting was held at the Foreign Minister level, multilateral negotiations on disarmament issues have become a continuous and essential part of the search for international peace and security, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Several disarmament agreements have been concluded in this Council Chamber, all of them within the context of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. Our Conference has not yet been able to achieve similar results. As we witness significant changes in international relations, in particular between the two military alliances, we shall intensify our efforts to lead our ongoing negotiations to successful results, as well as to explore every possibility offered by the agenda of the Conference and developments outside it to facilitate the identification of other areas where we can respond to the challenges of the present times by keeping up with the process of political change in those fields of specific responsibility for the Conference. I would venture to say that never since 1962 have we faced a situation so rich in opportunities for successful disarmament negotiations. But it is necessary for us to seize those opportunities and thus contribute to a qualitatively new stage in international relations.

I now continue with our business for today. In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference continues today its consideration of agenda item 3, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters". However, in conformity with rule 30 of its rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I have on my list of speakers for today Her Excellency the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand, His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the representatives of the German Democratic Republic, Venezuela and Egypt. I now give the floor to Her Excellency the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand, the Honourable Frances Wilde.

Ms. WILDE (New Zealand): Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to address this body during the period of your presidency. New Zealand values closely its relationship with Nigeria, not least because of our Commonwealth ties. The New Zealand observer delegation assures you of its continued support and co-operation.

I am particularly pleased to be speaking to the Conference on Disarmament at this time. Here in Europe and elsewhere in the world it is a period of tremendous change. After many years of tension and confrontation it is inspiring to see so much progress towards democracy, human rights and economic freedoms. New Zealand, geographically, lies a long way from these developments. But we share in the surge of hope which these events bring to the business of arms control. For years we have talked about increasing security at lower levels of arms. Now it is within our grasp.

The shape of world politics is undergoing fundamental change. And as tensions reduce between East and West, security will be seen to rest less on the weapons of war, and more on the wise application of political, economic and particularly environmental measures. For the people of the South Pacific this holistic view of security is one which is perceived as critical for our future.

There has been dramatic progress in East/West arms control since my predecessor addressed you two years ago. At that time the focus of international attention was the INF Treaty. For the first time ever, nuclear-weapon States had agreed to eliminate a whole class of nuclear weapons. That treaty, in our view, was an acknowledgement - long overdue - that security is enhanced not by more weaponry but by less.

Today the aspirations are much greater. In Malta, the super-Powers held out the promise of a whole flush of disarmament agreements during 1990. The recent Moscow and Ottawa meetings have brought this tantalizingly close to reality. New Zealand commends the United States and the Soviet Union for the progress they have made in their START negotiations. The massive cuts proposed in START, when achieved, will be a momentous step towards the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Equally important are the conventional force cuts and confidence-building measures being negotiated here in Europe. After 15 fruitless years of Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction talks, who could have foreseen the amazing progress made at Vienna during the last 12 months?

We have also been impressed by the "open skies" concept, which has been the subject of the recent Ottawa Conference. Transparency is of the essence of arms control. The concept of "open skies" goes to the heart of the question. It is not a new idea, being a legacy of the first super-Power summit, 35 years ago. New Zealand looks forward to other States embracing greater openness, including "open skies", as a means of building confidence.

Against this backdrop, I feel confident in saying that the Conference on Disarmament can afford to be more ambitious than in the past. If the Conference is to retain international credibility, it has no choice but to

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exploit recent developments and produce concrete results. If it does not, the Conference runs the risk of becoming redundant. In the face of the new bilateral rapport, and the sweeping changes in Europe, it seems to us that the CD runs a very real risk of being outpaced by political events.

I say this notwithstanding the important work being done here on the negotiation of a comprehensive chemical weapons convention. New Zealand fully supports the work of the CD on chemical weapons. We pledge our support for, and co-operation with, the Ad hoc Committee in its work. The point I am making is that expectations have changed over the past few months. As Presidents Bush and Gorbachev have done with START and CFE, the CD needs to set a self-imposed deadline for the completion of a CW text. That would help ensure that the momentum generated by the Paris and Canberra conferences is not lost. It would demonstrate that the CD is able to adapt to the accelerating pace of change in world security affairs. It would put political pressure on all States to find solutions to outstanding problems - for who wants to be seen to be standing in the way of the convention?

Last year under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Morel, the chemical weapons Ad hoc Committee made useful progress in redefining the "rolling text", and reconciling some of the outstanding differences. I refer in particular to the newly developed annex on chemicals, the protocol on inspection procedures, and the valuable work done by the Technical Group on Instrumentation.

The Instrumentation Group's report makes clear, once and for all, that the technical requirements of the convention's verification régime can be met by modern technology. Equally the protocol on inspection procedures reflects the considerable degree of consensus that exists on the requirements of an inspection régime.

I am heartened that verification difficulties at the technical level are now seen as problems to be solved, and not as convenient excuses to delay arms control. Such an approach augurs well for the resolution of more fundamental political issues. I am confident that under its new Chairman, Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden, the Committee will address these remaining differences in a constructive fashion.

The recent agreement by the super-Powers to proceed to substantially reduce their chemical weapon stocks provides further impetus for work here. Their decision to cease all chemical weapons production when the convention enters into force will have a very positive impact on the talks in the CD. However, New Zealand cannot support the super-Powers' decision to keep a residual stockpile of chemical weapons until all chemical-weapon-capable States adhere to the convention. We have very real concerns about the implications of this approach for an effective and all-embracing multilateral agreement.

There is growing awareness, in the South Pacific region, of the chemical weapons issues before this Conference. For this, and for its wider efforts in pursuit of chemical disarmament, New Zealand would like to take this opportunity to commend the Government of Australia.

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In our view the regional seminar on chemical weapons and the Government-Industry Conference held in Australia last year were particularly useful initiatives. The Government-Industry Conference heard the first collective statement by the world's chemical industry giving a commitment to assist in bringing about a total chemical weapons ban.

We believe that finishing work on the "rolling text" on chemical weapons at this session is the CD's most pressing task if the Conference is to retain credibility.

Arms control in chemical weapons has also highlighted another problem: arms disposal. The destruction of chemical weapons is not easy. It is in everyone's interests that it be done in any environmentally safe manner. This issue is causing some anxiety to Pacific nations, which have long protested at the use of their region for nuclear weapons testing in which they want no part. Now countries of my region are watching carefully the proposals made for the destruction of chemical weapons there. Small Pacific islands may seem remote from the huge continents of the world but, together with the Pacific Ocean, they are the homes and life-support systems of the many peoples of the region. We do not want the delicate ecosystem damaged any further by new intrusions.

Despite the importance of chemical weapons, the focus of the Conference cannot remain that subject alone. The Conference's work on other areas must be advanced. I am particularly concerned at the prolonged inability of the Conference to agree on a mandate for a committee to debate item 1 - a nuclear test ban.

New Zealand's commitment to a ban on all testing, by all States, in all environments, and for all time, is well known. It is shared by most countries. At the most recent General Assembly, 145 countries supported our resolution calling for such a ban as an urgent arms control measure. Of the 6 countries which opposed or abstained on the resolution, 5 are members of this Conference. I appeal today for greater flexibility to enable this Conference to begin to address this important issue.

The United States and the USSR have made good progress in almost completing the verification régimes for the threshold test-ban Treaty and the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty. But the fact is that both of these treaties were signed over a decade ago. They are not a substitute for a comprehensive test ban and will not put any real brake on the development of nuclear weapons. We urge all testing States to work towards a comprehensive test ban at the earliest possible date.

Nevertheless the two threshold treaties, despite their drawbacks, can contribute towards this goal through their verification régimes, which provide further proof that monitoring compliance with a comprehensive test ban is possible. In fact determining that an explosion has occurred is easier than measuring its size.

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It is with the objective of verification in mind that New Zealand is active in this Conference's ad hoc seismic group and its second major technical test now under way. Our seismic network stretches from Rarotonga to the Antarctic, making a significant contribution to the global nature of the test. We have also recently upgraded our seismic facilities and data communications network.

We urge all States to participate to the fullest extent possible in the test. The wider the participation, the stronger will be the message that there are no verification problems in the way of negotiating a comprehensive test ban.

Finally on this subject, I wish to pay tribute to last year's strenuous efforts by Ambassador Yamada of Japan in trying to achieve agreement on a mandate for an ad hoc committee on testing. It is a great shame that his efforts were not successful. I know that his successor, Ambassador Donowaki, is making equally strenuous efforts to resolve the impasse, and I understand that these are producing some positive developments. This is welcome.

Frustration at lack of progress on a test ban has already led many States to seek amendment of the partial test-ban Treaty. To achieve that would still require a dramatic change of attitude to a comprehensive test ban on the part of some depositary parties, which unfortunately does not seem likely at present. However, I believe that the amendment conference can serve a useful purpose by providing what this Conference has so far failed to provide - an in-depth exchange of views on testing. It is unfortunate that, in the PTBT context, not all testing States will be involved. But discussion of these issues is long overdue.

It is not only on a nuclear test ban that the Conference has failed to meet widespread expectations. Item 6, on negative security assurances, is another area where, despite broad agreement, little concrete progress has been achieved.

Since 1979, after the nuclear-weapon States gave unilateral NSAs, the Conference on Disarmament has searched for a common formula having a legally binding status. The search has so far eluded us. Some might argue that cuts in nuclear arsenals decrease the need for NSAs. Yet even after START there will be over 35,000 operational nuclear warheads in the world. NSAs will be an important part of the fabric of security for the foreseeable future.

One positive factor is the unanimous agreement on the need to continue the search for a common formula on NSAs. In that search we should not lose sight of two fundamental facts. First, the debate on NSAs does not take place in a legal vacuum. Article 2 of the United Nations Charter sets out the most fundamental negative security assurance derived from customary international law - the prohibition on any use of force except in self-defence.

The principle enshrined in that Article is basic to the security of all nations. In seeking a common formula on NSAs in a nuclear weapons context, we are merely seeking to elaborate further (and in no way to derogate from) the prohibition on the use of force set out in the Charter - bearing in mind, of course, the special destructive potential of nuclear weapons.

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The second point is this: when the different NSA declarations are examined it can be seen that all nuclear-weapon States have acknowledged that resort to nuclear weapons could only be envisaged in a far more limited range of circumstances than resort to conventional weapons.

It is New Zealand's hope that greater common ground can be developed on negative security assurances. We were pleased to note the progress evident at the General Assembly last year on this issue. For the first time New Zealand was able to vote in favour of both resolutions put forward on this subject. I hope that constructive developments towards arriving at a common formula on NSAs will occur during the present CD session. But if we are to find this common ground we must stop viewing the unilateral NSAs as principally reflecting irreconcilable security perceptions. Most importantly it is a debate about the further elaboration of existing legal rules which prohibit the use of force. It is only if we adopt this more constructive path that we can hope to make any progress towards achieving legally binding assurances. We will elaborate further on this view during the current session.

There are many urgent issues already on the CD's agenda where progress is lacking. But the Conference should also not fail to seize upon new issues where it can make a useful contribution. The question of naval forces is a critical one. Naval forces are not built up, maintained - or used - in isolation from overall military force structures. Their elimination should be discussed in the context of other disarmament issues so as not to introduce new disequilibriums. Of course, focus on naval forces is not the prerogative of the super-Power alone. There is increasing international concern about the global implications of sea-borne weapons and I believe the issue is not only legitimate but also an urgent matter for discussion by this body. In this respect a recent decision by the United States to phase out some categories of sea-borne weapons is welcome.

Earlier in this session, Sweden called for the negotiation of naval confidence-building measures and modernization of the laws of sea warfare. The Swedish Disarmament Ambassador also suggested that the question of prevention of incidents on the high seas should be put on the agenda of this Conference under agenda item 3. I support this and urge the Conference to take up the opportunity to address this potential threat to the disarmament progress which is being made in other respects.

I would like to take the opporunity to make some observations about the procedural aspects of the CD's work. The first relates to the composition of this body. In 1984 the CD decided, in principle, to increase its membership by not more than four members. It is a matter of regret to my delegation that this decision has not yet been implemented. Although New Zealand has applied for membership, I do not expect that initial expansion will involve us. Others have waited longer and their role in the Conference's work more than justifies their presence at the main negotiating table. The longer-term question of the CD's membership is a very real one which still has to be addressed. But the more immediate impasse, over the 1984 decision, has lasted too long. We urge CD members to implement that decision which they themselves agreed unanimously.

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This year 34 States have obtained observer status - an all-time high. It is a measure of international interest in the Conference's work. There is sometimes a preception that virtually all of us present in this room are observers in the disarmament process, and that the real work rests with the two major Powers. There is no denying that the nuclear-weapon States, and primarily the super-Powers, have a special responsibility for international disarmament and a treaty obligation in that respect. But success or failure in the disarmament process affects us all. And we all have a right - indeed a duty - to take part in the work of this Conference - the sole multilateral body for disarmament negotiations. Ultimately the bilateral and multilateral approaches to disarmament must be mutually reinforcing.

Many of the issues I have spoken about today are concerned with the horizontal proliferation of weapons. And despite progress on East/West issues horizontal proliferation is increasing. The proliferation of missile technology - a key link in building weapons of mass destruction - is of growing concern. Short-range weapons have already had a devastating effect in some areas. The spread of long-range weapons will put even more States at risk. I welcome international efforts to contain this problem. Regional arrangements to stem proliferation and build security also have an important role to play. South Pacific States have addressed the problem of nuclear proliferation through the Treaty of Rarotonga. The South Pacific is not a zone of nuclear confrontation. We are determined to keep it that way. All the countries which signed the Treaty of Rarotonga have now ratified it. And at last year's General Assembly 151 States supported a resolution commending the Treaty. It is regrettable that one nuclear-weapon State continues to test in the region. But China and the USSR have signed the protocols open to them, and the United Kingdom and the United States have stated that they do not act inconsistently with them. New Zealand hopes that France, the United Kingdom and the United States will all reconsider their position on signature in light of the changing international climate.

The Treaty of Rarotonga derives strength from article VII of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty. New Zealand will therefore be taking a particularly close interest in the review of the NPT later this year. One focus of the review will be the extent to which the nuclear-weapon States have fulfilled their article VI commitments. Not all States regard the answer as clear-cut.

We have seen the elimination of intermediate-range land-based missiles and hopefully, soon, cuts to strategic weapons. But there are other items on the disarmament agenda - and on the agenda of this Conference - where progress is urgent. In the lead-up to the NPT review conference, the 1990 CD session provides an opportunity to demonstrate that the NPT bargain is working. Chemical weapons issues will rightly have centre stage, but they need not crowd out other items. Instead they should be an example of the commitment with which other subjects should be handled.

Last year's General Assembly session confirmed an important trend in arms control. At last a spirit of co-operation is emerging and serious negotiations are possible. There are important subjects on which much more rapid progress is needed. There are also regions of the world where the

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tide of arms control has yet to flow as strongly as many would wish. That is particularly true of the East Asia-North Pacific region, which is of special concern to New Zealand and the countries of the South Pacific.

We believe that the 1990s - the third United Nations Disarmament Decade - can be the first decade of substantial reductions in the world's arsenals. It will be an historic process. This Conference must decide whether it will be part of that process. New Zealand's view is that it should. We will do all we can to achieve it. And we urge all delegations to approach the present session with that objective in mind.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Her Excellency the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand for her very important statement, and for the kind words she addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Dr. Ali-Akbar Velayati.

Mr. VELAYATI (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the beginning of a new decade - it pleases me to address this Conference once again. At the outset, allow me to offer my best congratulations to you, Sir, for presiding over the work of the Conference during the month of March. I am confident that the Conference will register progress under your able and wise leadership. It is especially pleasing to address the Conference under your presidency after having paid a fruitful visit to your country and to your warm and hospitable people less than two weeks ago. I would also like to take the opportunity to extend my regards to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Martenson, and Ambassador Komatina, the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament.

I very much benefited from the statement of the previous speaker, the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, the Honourable Mrs. Frances Wilde, whose country's commitment to peace and disarmament is axiomatic to all.

This Conference has, ever since its inception, enjoyed a special value and prestige as the sole multilateral body dealing with the most sensitive, complicated and yet vital issue of our time. Attempting to realize formal agreements in various areas of disarmament during a long period in which major Powers and other countries of the world feverishly pursued their global and regional arms race, seemed a devastating or, at times, an impossible task. But, with patience and perseverance, the Conference was able to live through all this and contributed to some agreements while maintaining a constant awareness amongst both Governments and the public. For this, you all deserve to be sincerely congratulated.

We ought to realize, however, that thus far the Conference has, at best, been able to apply the brakes, here and there, to slow down the arms race in some particular areas. I believe it is a fair assessment to judge this spring session as a turning-point, a beginning to a new era, as the stage seems set for the Conference to embark on its real and fundamental task of disarmament the world over.

I must admit, though, that I say this with some caution, as I do not believe we are quite over the hill yet. True, we have made some headway, but the road ahead is still rocky with dangerous turns - and I am not sure whether

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the Conference is fully in the driver's seat, not yet at least. This has already become evident in the formulation of the mandates of the different ad hoc committees, which still suffer handicaps and do not match the requirements of this critical juncture. We especially regret that the mandate for the Ad hoc Committee on the CW convention had to be compromised and remained incomplete against the will of the great majority of the members.

The changes in the world require changes in attitudes. The military doctrines that prevailed during the cold war were based on threat perceptions that have become all but obsolete. We understand that developments, particularly in Europe, have been so rapid and so overwhelming that it takes time to catch up and adjust. This much is understandable. But what remains as a source of serious concern is the establishment of a new doctrine based solely on the threat perceptions and security requirements of European countries along with the major Powers, and without due recognition of the needs and requirements of the developing countries.

For years the developing world called for an immediate end to the arms race and a genuine move towards disarmament. Those calls were, for a large part, ignored save in a few instances where the major Powers, based on their own concerns, forged some agreements. This led to a growing notion in the developing countries, especially the more developed ones amongst them, that in order to have any role they need to strengthen their own military capabilities and armaments. There seemed to exist a vague threshold, for quality and quantity of arms acquired and/or developed, beyond which a State qualified as a serious party to the negotiations. That notion still prevails and cannot change, unless the developing world as a whole gains its deserved share in the formation and establishment of the new world order, be it political, economic or military.

Our beloved planet Earth has at last found a very rare opportunity for peace. Not an armed peace, but a sensible peace that is deep and enduring. Yet the seeds of discord are again being sown. The crumbling of a devastating ideology is being replaced with an arrogant claim of total victory by the other. The truth is, in the eyes of the majority of the people of the world, the deprived majority, that both ideologies have failed, as both are materialistic and foreign to human nature.

This has led to a scenario for the future of our world depicting a Utopia where military conflicts have been replaced by economic confrontations. Even if this were a likely scenario, is this all that humanity should be expecting of itself? Is this what it should be reduced to? Certainly not, and it certainly will not.

I do not intend this as polemics. This is a deep conviction that without a corrected approach the chances for a secure, peaceful and disarmed world will once again be lost. Disarmament, in its true meaning, can only be realized if arrogance and dominance give way to equality and justice.

In this highly interrelated world, no one State, or collection of States, can claim to organize global security. No nation, large or small, can gain security at the expense of insecurity for others. Military concepts and

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strategies need to be scrutinized in a bid to reach a new security policy thinking. In order for the negotiations to be conducive to meaningful results, there have to be common understandings on security concepts both at the global and the regional levels. There also has to be confidence in the law. People who feel threatened or unprotected by law may be forced to disarm but, even so, it will surely be a temporary disarmament and arms will again be picked up at the earliest chance.

This is particularly significant in our region. It may seem today that Europe is the centre of the world. Well, this may be a valid assessment in a narrow time span. But history has largely been developed, shaped or affected by events in the Middle East. After all, this is a region that has given birth to three of the greatest prophets of God. The area from the Persian Gulf to the North of Africa can rightly be called the mirror of history and the mirror of the world.

This is most valid in regard to the CW convention. As the victim of the most extensive and horrendous chemical attacks we have a heartfelt desire for a ban on these weapons. We have suffered the catastrophic effects of chemical weapons on our military personnel as well as our civilians. We have also been a first-hand witness to the holocaust in Halabja which, on its second anniversary, still brings people to shivers, tears, anger and outrage. Thus, to us, there is not just an obligation, but a deep moral and inner urge for the abolishment and complete eradication of these barbarous weapons.

Yet, against this background, our country is faced with a complex paradox. In our immediate vicinity, we have a country that has waged a devastating war against us and, through it, has used chemical weapons at will. Even now, after the cease-fire, it is engaged in an extensive and ambitious programme of development and stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons. This is aside from potential threats from some other countries in the region, which are continuously arming themselves with advanced and sophisticated weaponry.

Under these conditions, we have two options. One is to follow logic and reason and convert capabilities and expertise in the field of chemical weapons acquired during the course of the war into practice as a deterrent vis-à-vis immediate and potential threats. The other is to follow our urge and set our hopes on a still ambiguous convention, and be prepared for a possible risk, or perhaps serious jeopardy, to our security. Despite the odds, we have decided to follow our urge, but we need assurances.

We do not intend to set pre-conditions. But there are necessities arising from the merits of the situation. Let us not forget that the Iraqi use of chemical weapons, followed by a chemical and missile build-up in the area, was a prime factor in giving momentum to the CW convention. Therefore for the success of the convention, there has to be genuine adherence to and full implenentation of the convention in our region.

To be frank, if the convention were ready today, the chances of its success in our region would be somewhere near zero. Without undermining the importance of the understandings at the level of major CW-producing countries,

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special attention should be maintained on the question of security in our region throughout the negotiations. Therefore, to assure success of the convention, in a broad and general scope, the following needs to be realized.

The continuation of a "no war, no peace" situation breeds tension in the region and keeps hostilities at the threshold of danger. In such an atmosphere countries with capabilities will find it very difficult to give away the CW option. Diplomatic efforts should therefore be mobilized to bring resolution 598 to the stage of immediate implementation.

Once the conflict ends, the two sides, as well as the other countries in the region, will be in a position to engage in a constructive dialogue, not as immediate or potential enemies or supporters of this or the other side, but as neighbours with common objectives and goals. The task can take the form of intensive and informal discussions, at first, to bring into the open the threat perceptions of each country - much like the current CSCE exercise in Vienna.

This may be followed by formal collective security arrangements in the region, including measures to prevent war and for reduction of arms as well as eradication of chemical weapons, on the understanding that the latter is an independent, more urgent issue.

The convention must be as foolproof and as intrusive as possible. We cannot risk our security and give up the CW option now in exchange for a weak convention at the end. In the past, the mistrust between the major producing countries was a prelude to a more concrete and detailed approach. At the same time the prospects for early realization of the convention were dim. Now, with changes in relations, issues may be simplified. The chances for an early convention can therefore be much higher now. But we should avoid over-simplification which may compromise the intrusive and binding character of the convention.

A high degree of automaticity must be maintained in the convention. Iran has been a victim of chemical weapons as well as political selectivity. We cannot therefore leave our security at the mercy of political decisions. Automaticity should include: firstly, a mechanism that ensures the availability of all relevant information, including information on possible violations, to all member States without any political prejudice; secondly, the concretization of routine and challenge inspections and inspections in the event of alleged use in a manner not hampered by political decisions; thirdly, provisions for sanctions and other punitive measures based directly on technical reports and not political decisions in cases of violations, and particularly in cases of use; and fourthly, a level of automatic assistance to the victims of use or the threat of use.

The element of timing and the order of destruction is also significant. We believe the 10-year period is too long and can make many things unpredictable. With political will, technical problems may be surmounted to reduce this time span. Moreover, the order of destruction should be formulated not just on a quantitative but also on a qualitative basis. This, for us, has tremendous security implications and we need to be quite watchful of it.

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The convention should indeed be universal. Though the notions of non-proliferation are gradually fading, they are not yet fully disposed of. On the other hand, it should be stressed that the availability of chemical technology for civil use must not be compromised by the convention. Technological assistance for developing countries is thus underlined.

As far as the Organization is concerned, we believe that the countries most affected need to have a better chance for representation.

I should add that, as regards our region, it is imperative that the countries concerned should join the convention simultaneously. Moreover, while we share the concerns about proliferation of nuclear arms in our region and its parallels with chemical weapons, we do not feel that there has to be a direct link if this would compromise the fate of the CW convention. In fact, we should strongly pursue the issue of nuclear proliferation in our region during the fourth NPT review conference.

For more than 20 years the have-nots of the non-proliferation Treaty have lived up to their obligations in good faith while the nuclear-weapon States have not respected their duties stipulated in article VI of the Treaty. While horizontal proliferation is a risk, vertical proliferation is a reality. The opponents of the Treaty rightly argue that those who have remained outside have benefited more than those who are in.

As long as the "nuclear" items on the agenda of this Conference are almost dead issues, negotiations on a comprehensive test ban remain pending and no agreement is reached for a legally binding convention or instrument to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, the States parties to the NPT will be sceptical and the NPT will remain a vulnerable Treaty.

Finally, I would like to reiterate once again that in the new climate where confrontation is giving way to co-operation, efforts should be made towards directing the winds of change to the good of mankind. Our task in this Conference calls for changes in attitudes and a new constructive approach to the issues before us. Our efforts should therefore focus on resolving the most acute problems based on justice and our global obligations. We should be pragmatic and realistic in our work and at the same time strive to achieve the ideals of a better world in which all peoples are treated equally, since God the Almighty created us all equal.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his important statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Dietze.

Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic): May I begin by expressing our appreciation to the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iran for their very interesting and thought-provoking interventions today? May I also express to you, Mr. President, the profound satisfaction felt by my delegation at seeing you in the Chair during the month of March? I am convinced that you will

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successfully guide the Conference's work, thanks to your personal commitment, great experience and diplomatic skill, which will enable the Conference to gain the necessary momentum. Let me express our appreciation for the efforts undertaken already by you to facilitate substantive work. As far as my delegation is concerned, I can assure you of its fullest support. Your predecessor, Ambassador Wagenmakers, deserves our appreciation and gratitude for his competence and negotiating skills which helped create the necessary conditions for starting our Conference's work.

Issues of nuclear disarmament are on the plenary's agenda. My statement today addresses questions related to it. I do so as this task is assuming new dimensions against the background of ongoing historic changes, growing confidence in international relations and improved co-operation in the safeguarding of peace. To persist in outworn patterns of thought in the face of such developments, we think, would mean gambling away chances for a more peaceful world, and latest developments, I think, are reflecting this.

If a nuclear war cannot be won and should never be fought, then rapid and serious steps in the nuclear disarmament process are the only logical alternative. Anyone who acts differently contradicts life. The INF Treaty is material evidence of the understanding that more nuclear weapons do not spell more security. Further evidence of this is provided by the Soviet-American negotiations on the halving of their strategic offensive weapons. The two great nuclear Powers have pushed open the door for nuclear disarmament and have initiated further steps towards this end.

Our Conference itself, being testimony of the commitment to disarmament in the nuclear field too, can and must make an important contribution in this endeavour. Notwithstanding all the efforts towards leading the negotiations on the comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons to a successful conclusion, we should not lose sight of this fact. After years of protracted deliberations it is time to get down to business with regard to the nuclear items on our agenda, too. Nobody underestimates the difficulties involved. Yet should this be allowed to hinder us from fully harnessing the potential for agreement and meeting each other half-way in the course of practical work? What counts, from our point of view, is that a beginning is made.

This goes particularly for the prohibition of nuclear weapon testing. Here lies the key to curbing the nuclear arms race and considerably restricting the qualitative refinement of nuclear weapons. We believe that 45 years after the first nuclear weapon test was carried out, it is more than advisable to start work on basic elements of a test-ban treaty. A favourable aspect in that context is the development of national technical means of verification. This is also borne out in the results achieved by the Group of Seismological Experts and in the Soviet-American verification experiment. It is precisely for these reasons that the German Democratic Republic has actively participated in the start-up tests for the global seismic data exchange test, GSETT-2. And it is for these reasons that my country figures among those States participating in phase 2, which is to start this year.

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

Let me also reaffirm my country's support for action either to amend the GSE's mandate on aspects of a verification system for monitoring a comprehensive test ban which go beyond the questions of seismology, or to establish a new expert group on this item. Preparing for effective verification is the underlying aim of other proposals. Our delegation circulated a pertinent working paper (CD/902) last year, suggesting the development of procedures for on-site inspections. In our view, such a method could help verify the decommissioning of nuclear testing sites and could assist in detecting and identifying seismic events whose status is unclear. Detailed documentation on these questions is under preparation.

As has already been outlined in the general debate, the German Democratic Republic considers that a subsidiary organ of the Conference should be set up to discuss the nuclear test ban in a business-like manner. We hold that Czechoslovakia's proposal submitted in document CD/863 could be a practical solution provided all sides display their good will. The outcome of yesterday's presidential consultations is encouraging in this regard. Like any attempt at compromise document CD/863 does not of course correspond to what we consider the optimum, but it could help make a fresh start.

Here it is to be added that the German Democratic Republic has from the very beginning endorsed the initiative of non-aligned countries for a conference on the broadening of the 1963 Moscow Treaty. We do so since we believe that in the wake of such a conference the CD could be given decisive momentum. The wrangling about the date of this amendment conference seems to be over. This can be gathered from the compromise recently agreed upon in New York. Our delegation considers that work should now be focused on substantive preparations for this conference. The German Democratic Republic is willing to play its part in solving the related problems.

More than a quarter of a century ago, in the preamble to the Moscow Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, the original parties undertook "to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time, determined to continue negotiations to this end, and desiring to put an end to the contamination of man's environment by radioactive substances". Never before, we think, have the prerequisites been more propitious for carrying out this commitment than today. Let us take the necessary steps to this effect now. This would create a new dimension of confidence which would be of advantage to the disarmament process as a whole.

We too feel concerned about the fact that the Geneva Conference on Disarmament has not made any headway on the issue of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. The recent debates, which were aimed at identifying a constructive solution in terms of item 2 of our agenda, are not very encouraging. We are in favour of arriving at a mutually agreed solution soon on how to proceed in this matter.

What is there actually to be said against a structured debate in the plenary on issues related to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament? Why should the idea of elaborating principles governing nuclear disarmament not be considered in depth? Is it not a worthwhile job for the Geneva Conference on Disarmament to start negotiations on the

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

cessation of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes? Steps to prevent fissionable material released by disarmament measures from being reused for weapons purposes would have to be discussed in this context. Why shouldn't we tackle the issues regarding measures to halt the proliferation of missiles and missile technology, as has been suggested by the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands?

The possibility of also negotiating confidence-building measures in the field of nuclear disarmament in the CD should, in our view, not be brushed aside. In this context, one could think of making transparent the arrangements made by the military alliances concerning the stationing and right of disposal of nuclear weapons. Confidence-building could surely be promoted outside the military alliances by disclosing the use of foreign territory for delivery systems. Proposals already exist for disclosing the existence of nuclear weapons on vessels calling at foreign ports. This shows that there is really no lack of substance for a subject-related discussion of the agenda item "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament".

Finally, the fourth conference to review the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is in the offing. We hope that it will be held in a constructive manner. This treaty has lost nothing of its topicality. Since its entry into force 20 years ago, this treaty has been an important instrument against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Therefore, the German Democratic Republic will declare at the forthcoming NPT review conference that the non-proliferation régime should be maintained and consolidated. This objective can be achieved in the context of measures to reduce and ultimately eliminate these weapons of mass destruction.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Venezuela, Ambassador Arteaga.

Mr. ARTEAGA (Venezuela) (translated from Spanish): We have also listened with the greatest of interest to the important statements that have just been made by the Minister for Disarmament of New Zealand and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. We wish to express to you, Mr. President, our satisfaction at seeing you in the Chair and at the effective and skilful way in which you have been guiding our work.

We would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to a champion of disarmament, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, originator of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and dean of this Conference for many years, Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles of Mexico. We do not feel that Ambassador Garcia Robles has left us; he will be with us constantly in this room and constantly in the efforts that are made to promote nuclear disarmament. We have always admired his devotion and contribution to the cause of disarmament, and therefore we convey to him our sincere gratitude.

Today it is not possible to make a statement in the United Nations without referring to the momentus changes that are taking place on the international stage. References to these events and their potential favourable effects are of particular importance in a forum such as this, which is devoted

(Mr. Arteaga, Venezuela)

to the promotion of such important causes as that of disarmament. It is really possible, after all, to lay the foundations for an era of solidarity and co-operation; it is really possible, through openness and constructive dialogue, to attenuate dogmatism and intransigence in times of renewal. Hence without making exaggerated claims it is quite legitimate to express the hope that, through a continuing and upward process, these historic times in which we are living now will be consolidated for the benefit of those specific purposes which are being pursued in this forum and which concern everyone. Nuclear disarmament cannot continue to be a quixotic undertaking, much less an abstraction that we frequently invoke with overtones of Utopia.

In recent decades we have been living in a nuclear peace based on well-known and repeatedly stated doctrines of nuclear deterrence. It is somehow supposed, ironically, that we should be grateful for this world peace that has been given to us by nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, and without this being a sentimental appeal, our aspiration has been and will continue to be that of trying to make progress towards a form of world peace based on a positive premise and not on the balance of terror. I say this despite the ineluctable realities with which, it seems, we have to live.

No less legitimate an aspiration is that concepts of security can evolve in keeping with the changes generated by the international dynamic. For example, for how long can we sustain the argument that we have to continue to arm ourselves because of the alleged nuclear superiority of one Power or another? Or that we have to arm ourselves in order to disarm, perhaps, in possible negotiations? It is clear that now, to complicate things even more, we are not just dealing with the quantitative factor in the arms race; intense and growing qualitative competition is creating new dilemmas and raising natural misgivings, holding all of us hostage in a kind of vicious circle dictated mainly by technological progress.

Be this as it may, the fact is that recently efforts have been made to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons, whose significance we have to acknowledge. To the satisfaction of all, the first-ever agreement for the elimination of a category of weapons has been reached, and, despite the inevitable scepticism stemming from so many frustrations, reasonable expectations are taking shape in the negotiations on strategic nuclear weapons - at least we hope so. Consequently, it cannot be denied that disarmament efforts have finally received an impetus which, although modest, is not yet obviously an irreversible trend. The will to reject confrontation does not easily become established, as we well know, so that we cannot but hope that the countries that possess the most sophisticated and destructive weapons will acquire the experience, motivation and sensitivity that are necessary to reach significant agreements on disarmament.

Although it is true that the nuclear Powers bear primary responsibility in disarmament negotiations and that we welcome any bilateral agreements that can be reached, it is always a good thing to remember that the international community has a vital interest in helping to ensure that such negotiations produce reliable results. Hence we persist in emphasizing the close interdependence and complementarity between bilateral and multilateral efforts. Until now the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body on the subject, has not been able to play a role commensurate with the

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responsibilities entrusted to it. Since its establishment it has not been able to establish ad hoc committees on the items relating to nuclear disarmament and the prevention of a nuclear war, nor has there been consensus on the re-establishment of the ad hoc committee on the nuclear test ban. Above all, however, we continue to hope that this Conference, prompted by recent international events, will begin to play fully its proper role, and that the efforts being pursued at the bilateral and regional levels will lead to results in this forum.

Venezuela attaches high priority to the conclusion of a treaty designed to introduce a complete ban on nuclear testing - without doubt, an objective of the greatest importance which has proved elusive so far. It is for this reason that, along with a representative group of countries, we took the initiative of promoting the conversion of the partial nuclear test-ban Treaty into a treaty that would enshrine a total ban on testing. To this effect we have proposed the convening of an amendment conference. Here we may recall the content of the message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations which was read out by his personal representative, Ambassador Komatina, to the effect that efforts to amend the partial nuclear test-ban Treaty of 1963 and turn it into a comprehensive test ban reflect widespread concern over the present situation. It should be remembered that in the Conference on Disarmament, during the 1989 session, Ambassador Yamada of Japan held consultations about the possibility of adopting an appropriate mandate for the establishment of the committee. Ambassador Donowaki continued these consultations, which should open the way once and for all towards the prompt and full consideration of this important subject.

We attach major importance to all actions designed to lead to the completion of the convention banning chemical weapons. We agree with others that the Paris and Canberra conferences helped to bring about awareness in public opinion and motivate the sectors most directly concerned in the application of the future convention. All this, taken together with the results of the meeting between Secretary of State Baker and Minister for Foreign Affairs Shevardnadze in September 1989 and last month, give grounds for a degree of optimism about the future evolution of the negotiations. We take note of the recent joint statement describing the outcome of the last meeting, which indicates the intention of the two Governments to reach a bilateral agreement on the destruction of chemical weapon stockpiles. It is to be hoped that this proposal will lead to tangible results in the negotiations taking place here, and that the total destruction of all chemical weapons will be carried out without further delay.

As we announced at the last United Nations General Assembly, Venezuela, desirous of making a contribution to international efforts to prepare the necessary conditions for the rapid implementation of the future convention, has taken the initiative of organizing in Caracas, in the middle of this year, a regional seminar for participants from Latin American and Caribbean countries. The purpose is to familiarize the States that are not members of the Conference on Disarmament with the scope, purposes and objectives of the convention, as well as the verification machinery that is to be established. In due course we will provide further information about this event.

(Mr. Arteaga, Venezuela)

Chemical weapons form an area where we have seen progress and a display of political will which somehow should also spread to other items of our agenda. Consequently we are happy to note the progress made during 1989 and at the beginning of this year in the negotiations in the Ad hoc Committee. The intensification of efforts in the Committee under the skilful leadership of Ambassador Morel led to progress in overcoming some of the existing difficulties. We would like to thank Ambassador Morel for the work that he accomplished, and to express our satisfaction at the results achieved. Now we see with pleasure that a representative of the Group of 21 is chairing the Ad hoc Committee for this year - Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden, to whom we offer our full co-operation.

One of the sectors which is worth highlighting is that of verification, with the preparation of a text on inspection procedures that is now serving as a basis for continued consideration of this point. Another of the areas in which progress has been made is that of technical aspects, in the areas of definitions, schedules of chemical substances and review arrangements, the declaration and verification régime, and so on. Unfortunately in the Committee progress has not been made to the same extent in the consideration of other important items, some of them of a political nature, such as those concerning assistance, economic and technological development, sanctions and the aspect relating to reservations. The intensive consultations held on two important issues - article IX, on challenge inspections, and the issue relating to the composition of the Executive Council - led to better understanding of the subject, although major differences still persist. We do not undervalue the improvements made in the mandate of the Committee for this session, but we are concerned that it contains no reference to the question of the prohibition of use. This is a point that deserves special attention.

As the negotiations proceed in the Committee, it becomes increasingly desirable to examine the question of the financial implications that will arise under the future convention on chemical weapons. Venezuela has placed on record its concern at the size and complexity of the organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons which is being outlined within the context of the convention, especially because of the financial burden that its operations would impose on the States parties to the instrument. There is a need for a clear definition of the principles that will serve as the basis for apportioning the cost of the functioning and the operation of the organization. The Ad hoc Committee should examine this matter carefully. We think it appropriate to reiterate the message of the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference.

We would like to express appreciation for the efforts made during 1989 by Ambassador Bayart of Mongolia as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. Likewise we reiterate our congratulations to Ambassador Shannon of Canada on his appointment as Chairman of the Committee for this session. Our delegation has assigned special importance to the initiatives relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is for this reason that Venezuela has insisted, both in the Conference plenary and in the Ad hoc Committee, on the need to focus our efforts on the adoption of specific measures designed to prevent an arms race in this environment. This procedure would be in keeping with the content of

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the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, and here I would like to refer to the most recently adopted resolution, resolution 44/112, which in operative paragraph 8 requests the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish an ad hoc committee with an adequate mandate at the beginning of its 1990 session, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. Such a decision is becoming more and more urgent by the day because of the justified concern of the international community about the use of new technologies in the military field, and the application of scientific research for the development for new weapons that are designed to be used in outer space. As to the specific work of the Committee, we have noted with concern the attitude of some countries that are trying to limit the Committee's work indefinitely to a general exchange of views on the subject, and their lack of interest in carrying out concrete negotiations.

The work done in previous years has led to progress in the examination and identification of the various questions relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. A number of questions have been identified, and although we have not achieved a common approach, there is better understanding of the problems and of the various views. The Committee has given careful consideration to the applicable legal régime for outer space through a detailed analysis of the existing treaties on the subject. It has been recognized that this régime applicable to space is not, as such, sufficient to prevent an arms race there. Hence the need to consolidate it, strengthen it and make it more effective. There is also a need for strict observance of existing agreements, both bilateral and multilateral.

A sizeable number of measures have been proposed to prevent an arms race in outer space and ensure that the exploration and use of space will be pursued solely for peaceful purposes, in the interest of and to the benefit of all countries. Some of these proposals involve an all-embracing approach, for the total, universal prohibition of weapons in space at the earliest date. Others are specific proposals for partial measures, as well as some measures concerning confidence-building. In the future work of the Committee account should be taken of the work already done. For this reason we believe that the time has come for the Committee to focus its attention on the consideration of concrete measures designed to prevent an arms race in outer space. Thus our position is clearly based on very practical and realistic reasons, and not on symbolic or whimsical positions. We would like to reiterate the proposal that was presented by the delegation of Venezuela in this body, designed to extend the partial ban on space weapons set forth in the outer space Treaty of 1967 to convert it into a total ban that would cover any kind of weapon or system of such weapons that could be used in space, from space or into space. This proposal, which is designed to bring about a comprehensive approach, is contained in document CD/851 dated 2 August 1988.

Thinking on the efficiency and functioning of the Conference on Disarmament is particularly appropriate in the light of recent international changes. During the course of this general debate opinions and concerns have been expressed regarding the adaptation of this body to the "new times". We agree that it is necessary to adapt, but in order to revitalize this Conference as far as possible, and not to modify it or detract from commitments that are

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intrinsic in efforts being made in the field of nuclear disarmament. Like other speakers I will also refer to the statement made by Ambassador Azambuja of Brazil, but to quote his words "now that confrontation along East-West lines has abated and verification has been accepted as a major ingredient in any disarmament or arms limitation agreement, it is as if unexpected success and a dramatic change of circumstances have had a paralysing effect on some of us". We must react decisively to the new international situation, and we must do so in a constructive spirit. We are also in favour of efforts by the Group of Seven, or any other informal body as has been suggested, to embark on an examination of the challenges and dilemmas that face this Conference as far as its viability is concerned. Obviously even the most experienced and skilful diplomat, even the most knowledgeable about the subject, will be unable to put forward ideas that will bear fruit if, at the moment of truth, the indispensable political will to negotiate is lacking. As far as the delegation of Venezuela is concerned, I must say that the purposes of the Conference on Disarmament are well defined and more valid than ever before, as a reflection of the universal aspiration of the international community. The favourable international circumstances, rather than making these precise objectives more distant, should help make the efforts of the Conference more productive - efforts which are not vain, and which we consider essentially realistic in today's world and, in the final analysis, in keeping with the unrenounceable desire to tackle resolutely the problems caused by nuclear weapons.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Venezuela for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Elaraby, who will speak in his capacity as co-ordinator of the Group of 21 for agenda item 4.

Mr. ELARABY (Egypt): As you have just said, Mr. President, I have asked for the floor today in my capacity as item co-ordinator on chemical weapons to make a statement on behalf of the Group of 21. Before exercising this responsibility I wish to seize this opportunity to express my delegation's genuine pleasure at seeing a distinguished, able and highly esteemed Nigerian diplomat presiding over the work of the Conference on Disarmament during the month of March. We are at the mid-point of your presidency and already we have benefited from your competent leadership in many respects, including the establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. I wish also to pay tribute to your two very eminent predecessors, Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands and Ambassador Benhima of Morocco, for their distinguished and highly appreciated efforts while presiding over the CD.

On behalf of the Group of 21, I should like to make the following statement.

The Group of 21 is committed to the early conclusion of the negotiation by the Conference on Disarmament of a non-discriminatory convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons and on their destruction. This convention should be of universal adherence.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

The Group of 21 reaffirms its position that the future convention on chemical weapons should prohibit the use of such weapons under any circumstance from the date the convention enters into force. In the view of the Group of 21, this undertaking has already been agreed to in article I, paragraph 3 of the draft convention.

To this end all chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities shall be destroyed during the destruction period of 10 years as stipulated in article IV, paragraph 5 and article V, paragraph 8, and as reflected in the agreed proposal by the two major chemical weapons possessors on the order of destruction. This undertaking shall be without any reservation. The stocks and facilities shall be monitored by the future organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons until their total destruction not later than the end of the destruction period.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. That concludes my list of speakers today. Does any other member wish to take the floor?

I have requested the secretariet to circulate today a timetable for meetings to be held by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the coming week. The timetable has been prepared in consultation with the chairmen of subsidiary bodies and, as usual, is merely indicative and can be changed if the need arises. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I have no other business for today, and I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 20 March, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.